

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 /072 W

----- 020682

R 060655Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8452

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T SANA 2297

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE

SUBJ: YAR DEALINGS WITH IRAQ

REF: SANA 1952

SUMMARY. YARG HAS LONG RECOGNIZED IRAQIS AS POTENT
SUBVERSIVE ELEMENT IN YEMEN BUT TRIED TO PROPITIATE RATHER
THAN OPPOSE THIS THREAT. YEMENIS ARE GOING TO KEEP ON
TRYING, TOO, ALTHOUGH
THEY HAVE MOVED IN TO ARRESTSOME
LOCAL IRAQI AGENTS.

1. YAR PRESIDENT HAMDI HAS FOLLOWED POLICY IN LAST YEAR
OF SEEKING TO REDUCE REAL OR POTENTIAL AID WHICH IRAQ

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PROVIDES BA'ATHI AND OTHER FOES OF YARG. THUS, DESPITE

FRESH AND BITTER MEMORIES OF IRAQI INVOLVEMENT IN 1974 COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST HAMDI, YAR PRESIDENT TRAVELED EARLY THIS YEAR TO IRAQ IN EFFORT TO MEND FENCES. HE THOUGHT HE HAD SUCCEEDED.

2. IRAQIS SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED NEW SERIES OF AID PROJECTS FOR YEMEN. HAMDI THOUGHT HE ALSO HAD ASSUREANCES THAT IRAQI DIPLOMAT HERE WOULD FOLLOW CONCILIATORY RELATIONSHIP WITH YARG.

3. IN LAST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS, HOWEVER, INFLOW FUNDS FROM IRAQ HAS REPORTEDLY REACHED LEVELS THAT CAN ONLY BE ASSOCIATED WITH EFFORT TO OVERTHROW LOCAL GOVERNMENT. IRAQI CHARGE WAS QUIETLY DIRECTED TO LEAVE LAST MONTH. HAMDI HAS ALSO FINALLY BEGUN INTERNAL CRACKDOWN WITH NUMBER OF ARRESTS INCLUDING MAN REGARDED AS LOCAL RING LEADER, MOHAMMAD SHUKRI. ASNAY SAID THERE HAVE BEEN "OTHER ARRESTS TOO."

4. ACCORDING TO YARG FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH AL-ASNAY, HOWEVER IN TALK WITH AMBASSADOR ON JULY 2, YAR INTENDS "TO LEAVE DOOR OPEN" TO BETTER RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. MEANS TO DO THIS IS CONTINUED EFFORT TO COURT QASSIM SALAM, A YEMEN-BORN IRAQI CITIZEN WHOM ASNAY CLAIMS IS "NUMBER 4" IN BAGHDAD REGIME. ASNAY SAYS ALTHOUGH QASSIM SALAM VERY ACTIVE IN IRAQ, AND SIGNS AGREEMENTS WITH SOVIET UNION ON BEHALF OF BOTH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ, HE HAS ALSO LONG TAKEN A VERY ACTIVE INTEREST IN YEMEN. HE WAS, THEREFORE, INVITED TO COME BACK TO YEMEN LAST MONTH AS GUEST OF YARG. (SEE SANA 1952) THIS, ASNAY HOPES, WILL CONFUSE (AND HELP IDENTIFY) QASSIM SALAM'S FRIENDS HERE, AND PERHAPS START A PROCESS OF CO-OPTING HIM. ASNAY ALSO SAID THAT IRAQI DEVELOPMENT AID MIGHT CONTINUE TO FLOW INTO YARG COFFERS AS RESULT OF THIS TACTIC, AND, HE HOPES, PERHAPS DIVIDE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SUBVERSION HERE. COMMENT. INTERNAL CLAMPDOWN BY YARG AND PAVING OF IRAQI DIPLOMAT PUTS YARG-IRAQI RELATIONS AT IMPASSE. WE DOUBT THAT YEMENI CONNECTION OF QASSIM SALAM, OR WILLINGNESS OF YARG TO CONINUE DEAL WITH IRAQIS, WILL MODERATE ANTIREGIME EFFORTS ALREADY LAUNCHED HERE. IRAQI MAY, IN FACT,

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INTEND TO INCREASE EFFORTS. TRAVEL ABROAD OF IRAQI CLIENTS ABU LUHUM, ABDALLAH BIN HUSSAIN AND ABU SHUWARIB (SEPTEL) LENDS INTELS TO THIS INTERPRETATION. WE ARE, AT SAME TIME, HARD PUT TO UNDERSTAND WHY IRAQIS SHOULD CARE SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE. PERHAPS SOVIETS ARE PUSHING THEM. PERHAPS THEY WANT TO MAKE PROBLEMS FOR THE SAUDIS. PERHAPS IRAQI SECURITY ORGANS ARE ABLE TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY AND EVEN IN OPPOSITION TO OTHER PARTS OF IRAQI

GOVERNMENT.

SCOTES

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, CONCILIATION, POLICIES, INFILTRATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JUL 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SANA02297
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760259-0690
From: SANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760787/aaaaczaj.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 SANA 1952
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: YAR DEALINGS WITH IRAQ
TAGS: PFOR, YE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006